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Ashore at the Farallones

In mid-May I spent four exciting days on Southeast Farallon Island, which supports one of the largest seabird colonies in western North America.

Actually to step onto the island required that I leave the powerboat I had arrived on and take a small motor boat to the "Billy Pough," a large circular platform bound with cargo netting. Clutching the netting I was lifted safely above the cliffs onto the island by a crane.

Once safely ashore I was immediately aware of the large scale of activity. There are birds *everywhere*. Although the most obvious species are the Western Gulls, whose nests dot the cliffs and scraggly fields, the most abundant are the Cassin's Auklets which are nowhere to be seen. The Cassin's Auklets only come out at night! If an auklet ventures out of its burrow during the day a gull will not hesitate to swallow it whole.

There are two large houses on the island. One is the Coast Guard house and the other supports the researchers on the island. Although the Farallon Islands are a National Wildlife Refuge and are under the administration of the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge, the caretakers of the island are staff from the Point Reyes Bird Observatory. From two to four biologists (plus occasional volunteers) live on the island.

Please turn to page 103

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Field Trips Calendar

See the June *Gull* for details on the following trip:

Saturday, July 3—San Mateo Coast.

Saturday-Sunday, July 10-11—Mono Basin. On **Saturday** meet at **7:30 a.m.** at the Big Bend Campground three miles west of Lee Vining on Hwy. 120. **Sunday's** meeting place will be decided on Saturday. From the Bay Area take your favorite route to Yosemite National Park. Take Hwy. 120 over Tioga Pass to the town of Lee Vining or to one of the Forest Service camps west of the town. Motels in Lee Vining include: Best Western Lake View Motel (714-647-6543), Gateway Motel (714-647-6467) and Murphey's Motel (714-647-6316). We will bird in Lee Vining, Mono Lake and other areas. Be prepared to caravan to the various birding spots. Leader: Jon Zablackis (527-2083). (✓)

Sunday, July 11—Chimney Rock, Point Reyes. Join us for our annual trip to see nesting Black Oystercatchers and Western Gulls. Meet at **9 a.m.** at the Point Reyes National Seashore Headquarters near Olema. We will caravan to the coast. Bring lunch, liquids and a spotting scope if you have one. Leader: Betty Short (921-3020). (✓)

Saturday-Sunday, August 14-15—Yosemite National Park. On **Saturday** meet at the parking area for Cathedral Lake on the south side of the road to Tuolumne Meadows at **8:30 a.m.** There will be a short car shuttle to the area where the hike begins. This will be an all-day, four-to-five mile alpine ecology trip making an entire circuit of the Cathedral Peak, with many stops to observe the flowers, birds and geology of the area. The trip will go by Cathedral Lake, Upper Cathedral Lake and Budd Lake, with gorgeous high-mountain scenery included. While the pace will be slow, be forewarned that the trip will be *reasonably strenuous* with two moderately steep climbs involved, so all participants should be used to hiking at higher altitudes.

On **Sunday** we will meet at **8 a.m.** at the parking area just before the Tioga Pass Entrance Station on Hwy. 120 and will drive a short distance to the Saddlebag Lake area, where we will hike up to the Carnegie Institute Timberline Station, an area where a five-year Alpine Breeding Bird Study has been conducted. Round trip hike will be about three miles. We should return to cars by midafternoon for those driving back to the Bay Area.

For those interested in accommodations, contact the Yosemite Park & Curry Co. (209-373-4171) for accommodations at Tuolumne Meadows High Sierra Camp and White Wolf Lodge. Camping will be available at Tuolumne Meadows and White Wolf campgrounds. Check with the

National Park Service Information (209-372-4461, Ext. 248) for information about reservations and up-to-date campground information. Leader: George Peyton (444-3131) weekdays only.

Saturday, August 14—San Mateo County Coast. Meet at Pescadero Beach parking lot at the intersection of Hwy. 1 and Pescadero Rd. at **8 a.m.** Please carpool to this point because parking is limited and carpooling will be necessary. We will bird at Pescadero in the morning and Año Nuevo in the afternoon. If you wish to join the group for the afternoon only, meet us at the Año Nuevo parking lot at **1 p.m.** Bring lunch and a light jacket; the weather can be cool along the coast. Brown Pelicans, Heermann's Gulls and Black Oystercatchers are probable. We may also see Harlequin Ducks, Black Swifts and Bank Swallows at Año Nuevo. Leader: Ted Chandik (493-5330). (✓) (\$)

Friday-Sunday, August 27-29—Backpacking Trip to Lassen Volcanic National Park. We will backpack in three miles and spend two nights camped by a lake near a large meadow. We should see mixed flocks of warblers and other songbirds that summer in Lassen, resident birds of the mountains and perhaps some migrating shorebirds. We will be in beautiful country! Everyone will be responsible for personal gear and food, although some cooperative meals may be arranged. For details call David Rice (521-4966) or Robin Pulich (848-3594). This trip is limited to 12. (✓)

Saturday, September 25—Bus Trip to Monterey Bay Area. We will ride in the comfort of a chartered bus to many of Monterey's finest birding areas, including the municipal pier, the shoreline to Pt. Pinos and the Carmel River mouth. Our leader will be Ted Chandik. The bus will depart from the East Bay at **6:30 a.m.** and make stops in San Francisco and Palo Alto. The fare will be \$20 per person.

Reservations will be given to the first 35 respondents. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope and check made payable to Golden Gate Audubon Society to the GGAS office, 2718 Telegraph Ave., #206, Berkeley, CA 94705. Details of the trip will be sent with an acknowledgment of your check.

Saturday-Sunday, September 25-26—Mount Pinos for California Condors. Leader: Eben McMillan. See September *Gull* for details.

Carpooling arrangements can be made for trips marked (✓). Call Kate Partridge at 524-9817 and leave a message. She will contact you.

Problems: If for any reason you have difficulty getting in touch with a field trip leader or need information regarding a trip, call Shirley Kelly (387-8290) or the GGAS office (843-2222). *The office will be closed during the month of August.*

—FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

May Observations – Through May 25

This month seemed average, with some birds lingering or out of place, migration winding down and the spring vagrant season starting up. One Stockton observer (DY) noted that many landbirds that usually concentrate in the foothills seemed to be concentrating in the Central Valley. Could near-record snow packs be causing a late spring in the lower elevations? Some migrants seemed absent from the whole region (non-breeding *Empidonax*) or very scarce (Calliope Hummingbird, only one Yellow Warbler on Southeast Farallon). All Farallon records are courtesy of Point Reyes Bird Observatory.

Two notable Big Days were reported. One team (DR, JML, BDP, JP, KVV) recorded 202 species in Monterey County May 1, representing new North American records for May, a single county and a single latilong (one degree of latitude by one degree of longitude). Another team (BR, JR, EH, KHi) found 157 species on April 24, a fine total for entirely within Contra Costa County.

LINGERERS

A male Eurasian Wigeon was reported near Grizzly Island May 7 (RL). Two Harlequin Ducks were at Marconi Cove on the Point Reyes spring count May 23 (BY), and an Oldsquaw was at Fish Docks the same day (JW). A Hooded Merganser was spotted at the Palo Alto Flood Basin May 9 (JR, AHa). Monterey still had a Glaucous Gull April 30 and May 2 (DR). The adult **Little Gull** was still at Stockton Sewage Ponds April 29 (DY); the real surprise was that there were **two** adult **Little Gulls** there April 30 (KH, PU)! A late Ancient Murrelet was noted at Southeast Farallon May 2 (AH, *et al*) and May 6 (PRBO) and another was off Cannery Row, Monterey, May 10 (AB). Two pairs of Evening Grosbeaks still attending feeders in Stockton April 25 provided a rare side-by-side comparison with a Black-headed Grosbeak (DY, FW)!

RARE WATERBIRDS

Fork-tailed Storm Petrels were unexpectedly reported off the jetty at Moss Landing May 8 (RJ, AHa, BD) and off Cannery Row, Monterey, two days later (AB). Five Cattle Egrets at San Rafael May 24 (DT) might be considered lingerers from winter, but the status of this invading species is changing. An adult Little Blue Heron returned to Palo Alto by May 16 (TC). A scattering of Red Phalaropes occurred widely with Northerns along our coast (mob), as far inland as Alameda Naval Air Station (PK, LC). Pectoral Sandpiper and Baird's Sandpiper are both very rare here in spring and most reports are surely erroneous, as most Californians know only their juvenile plumage. Nevertheless, a male Pectoral Sandpiper was at Bodega Bay May 21-22 (NC, PC) and two apparent Baird's Sandpipers touched down briefly at Stockton Sewage

Ponds April 29 (DY). Two Sanderlings there that day (DY) were still present May 7 (KH, PU).

The **South Polar Skua** six miles east of Southeast Farallon April 22 (PRBO) was one of a very few spring records from our area. A Black Tern 14 miles west of Point Bonita May 2 (DL, *et al*) was a rare offshore migrant. A Franklin's Gull was at Moss Landing May 2 (JW) and two **Black Skimmers** were there May 1 (MLML).

COASTWARD AND LOCAL RARITIES

Two White-throated Swifts on Southeast Farallon April 26 to May 3 constituted the first spring record there and a Costa's Hummingbird on the Island April 27 was almost as rare. A male **Williamson's Sapsucker** at Sunol Regional Park May 6 (SA) was a montane stray present at an impressively late date. In this decade all the Purple Martin nests should be noted so that the decline of this species can best be assessed and hopefully halted. A pair of Martins was found May 1 nesting with Starlings at the summit of Mines Rd. (JR, KHi, *et al*). In most such cases, Starlings eventually evict the Martins.

May 1-5 brought reports of the scarce migrant Yellow-breasted Chat: two miles south of the San Antone Junction (JR, KHi, *et al*), near Crystal Springs Reservoir (AH, *et al*), Alameda (DK) and Southeast Farallon (PRBO). The male Blue Grosbeak at Glen Canyon Park, San Francisco, May 12 (AH) was a rare coastward migrant or vagrant. Yet another Sage Sparrow visited Southeast Farallon, on April 22. The male **Great-tailed Grackle** was again singing at San Francisco Aquatic Park April 29 (RWJ) and May 2 (PG) and was still present as of May 28 (RI).

EASTERN LANDBIRDS

Vagrant landbirds appeared on schedule, the vanguard for June's majority. On Southeast Farallon, both May 5 and 6 marked the arrivals of single Black-and-white Warblers and single Tennessee Warblers. Blackpoll Warblers arrived May 6 and 10. A Black-and-white Warbler was found in Pacific Grove, also on May 6 (GP). In San Francisco's Lincoln Park, three singing male warblers appeared, a Hooded Warbler May 18 (AH, MLR) and Black-and-white and Black-throated Green Warblers May 22 (PU, KH). An American Redstart was at Lake Merced May 23 (DD).

A singing male Bobolink visited Bolinas May 24 (BH, BV). The **Rusty Blackbird** on Southeast Farallon arrived on the exceptionally late date of April 22, matched only by one there in 1973. The season's initial Indigo Bunting arrived at Southeast Farallon May 7. An apparent male Lark Bunting was observed in song flight over Tilden Park May 7 (NC). A late Harris' Sparrow appeared at Salmon Creek, Sonoma County, May

23 (NC). A White-throated Sparrow on Southeast Farallon May 20 was rather late.

Observers: Steve Abbors, Alan Baldrige, Ted Chandik, Laura Collins, Peter Connors, Nancy Conzett, Donna Dittman, Bob Dyer, Pedro Gonzales, Kem Hainebach (KH), Sid Harrison, Alan Harvey (AHa), Ed Hase, Burr Heneman, Kevin Hintsa (KHi), Alan Hopkins (AH), Richard Ives, Richard Jeffers, R. W. Jimerson, Diane Kelly, Paul Kelly, Moss Landing Marine Lab, Jerry M. Langham, Ray Lewis, Donna Lion, Jim McGee, many observers (mob), Dan Murphy, Point Reyes Bird Observatory (Farallon report thanks to Teya McElroy), Benjamin D. Parmeter, John Parmeter, Gene Parsons, Bob Richmond, Jean Richmond, Don Roberson, Mary Louise Rosegay, Dennis Serdehely (thanks to Dennis for the Monterey area report), Dorothy Tobkin, Phil Unitt, Kent Van Vuren, John Warriner, Freeman Wilson, David Yee, Bob Yutzy.

—STEVEN F. BAILEY, *Observations Editor*
Museum of Vertebrate Zoology,
University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720
(phone 548-9507 or Joseph Morlan at 524-7421)

Least Tern Update

Thanks to GGAS, the Navy and the Department of Fish and Game, the California Least Tern nesting colony at the Alameda Naval Air Station is being studied and managed for a third consecutive season.

Least Terns arrived to roost at the colony site as early as April 30, when 82 Least Terns were counted there. The first nests were initiated by May 10 and by May 30 at least 63 nests were observed. The first chicks were discovered in the late afternoon of June 1. Observations suggest the only complete clutch found began hatching May 31 or possibly June 1.

Again, three pairs of Least Terns have nested outside the fence that was erected before the 1981 nesting season to protect colony members. One of these nests failed by May 19 due to egg predation, possibly by a meadowlark. However, egg predation has so far been limited to this one instance. All other nests without hatchlings have remained intact.

Anyone who sees a Least Tern is urged to call the GGAS "Rare Bird Alert." Your observations are very helpful.

—LAURA D. COLLINS

Panama Trip Art Show

Woodcarvings and paintings by GGAS members Molly and George Monheit will be shown during the month of August at the Lafayette branch of the Contra Costa County Library, 952 Moraga Rd. The works are a result of last year's GGAS-sponsored Panama trip. *Birdwatcher's Digest* will publish, in its July issue, an article by Mrs. Monheit on the trip.

Willow Flycatchers, Anyone?

The California Department of Fish and Game is undertaking a study of the Willow Flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii*) in California to document distribution, abundance, habitat requirements and reproductive success. Please send any reports of recent sightings (within the past decade) of breeding Willow Flycatchers to E. C. Fullerton, Director, California Department of Fish and Game, 1416 Ninth St., Sacramento, CA 95814. Please include your name, address and phone number, along with the following: location of sighting (if possible, provide legal description of nest territory—township, range, section, $\frac{1}{4}$ section—ideally, a copy of a topographic map should be included), date of observation, behavioral notes and any other relevant information (e.g., evidence of nest parasitism by Brown-headed Cowbirds (*Molothrus ater*) or threats to habitat). This information will assist state and federal agencies in developing habitat protection and species management plans for this bird species of special concern.

Seabird Mortality in Monterey Bay

During the summer of 1980 an enormous and unprecedented number of dead seabirds were found littering the beaches of Monterey Bay. The summer months of 1981 brought an even greater die-off with 1500 dead birds washed ashore in one day on Manresa beach. The California Department of Fish and Game undertook to investigate the cause and the extent of these deaths. Its report noted that the recent introduction of monofilament, entangling gill nets in nearshore waters, was the cause of the mortality of more than 22,000 seabirds. The report further noted that the majority of birds caught were Common Murres and that "... breeding colonies from the Farallon Islands to Point Sur may not be able to sustain the level of mortality witnessed in 1981..." The need for immediate action is apparent.

Acting on the recommendation of the Monterey Audubon Society, Point Reyes Bird Observatory, Department of Fish and Game and other concerned groups, Senator Henry Mellow of Monterey has introduced SB 1475. The bill would prohibit the use of entangling nets at a depth of less than 60 feet in selected areas of Monterey Bay. This prohibition is expected to reduce significantly or eliminate seabird mortality associated with the introduction of shallow water gill nets.

The Board of Directors of GGAS has taken a position in support of SB 1475 and its passage seems assured. There is reason to believe that no funding is being provided for monitoring activities. The Board has pledged to contribute to a fund to provide support for monitoring.

Conservation Notes

WATER INITIATIVE CAMPAIGN EFFORTS NEEDED

Late in May, it was confirmed that enough signatures were obtained to qualify the Water Resources Initiative for the November ballot. A number of GGAS members signed this initiative at membership meetings and were active in collecting signatures. These efforts were invaluable but now even more work is needed to publicize this important initiative prior to the election.

The initiative will decide the future of our rivers and streams, reform of existing ground water overdrafting abuses and incentives for water conservation. The Water Resources Initiative is endorsed by a number of state legislators and former Chief Justice Donald Wright, who chaired the Governor's Commission to Review California Water Rights Law. It is also unanimously supported by environmental organizations including the National Audubon Society and GGAS. Special protection will be provided for the Stanislaus River Canyon. For more information on this critical initiative and how you can help, contact the California Water Protection Council at 2701 College Ave., Berkeley, CA 94705 (415-540-5551). Detailed fact sheets and a copy of the initiative are also available at the GGAS office and through the Conservation Committee.

An enjoyable way to help in the fundraising is to participate in white-water rafting trips on the Kern River, all proceeds of which will be paid to the California Water Protection Council. Trips are scheduled July 10 and 11, July 24 and 25 and all weekends of August except the first. The cost is \$45 for a one-day trip and \$100 for a two-day trip, with a 10% discount for groups of six. Contact Joel Barder at 221-9273 to sign up for trips and to obtain additional details on this highly appropriate and enjoyable way of raising funds to protect our rivers and streams.

—ROBIN PULICH

Help Wanted

Calling all interested parties in the East Bay, San Francisco, Marin County, and every place else!

There are two fundraising events occurring in October and November for which the Mono Lake Committee needs your help. The first is a cruise into northern San Francisco Bay and the marshlands near the Delta on October 17. We board the *Harbor Queen* at 8:40 a.m. at the Berkeley Marina and return at 5 p.m. There will be specialists aboard to tell about the wildlife and other facets of the Bay and its environs. Tickets are \$30 before September 19 and \$33 after that. You can help by buying tickets for yourself and encouraging others to join you. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope with your reservation to Mildred Bennett as indicated

below. Make checks payable to Mono Lake Committee (not tax-deductible) or to GGAS earmarked for Mono Lake Fund (tax-deductible).

The other event occurs November 19 when the winners of the Arts Drawing for Mono Lake will be announced. We need many volunteers to sell tickets for this to become a financial success. The grand prizes are: 1) a tapestry of Mono Lake by Rusty Brockman, 2) a color photo by Stephen Johnson and 3) a watercolor painting by Lady Jill Mueller. There also are 34 additional prizes donated by the Audubon Society. If 100 people would each sell ten sets of 12 tickets at \$10 per set, the gross income would be \$10,000! The Mono Lake Committee needs much more, but this would be a big help. Please be counted among those who will buy tickets for themselves or who will sell to clubs and groups with which they are associated. Act NOW, October and November are not so far off!

If you wish tickets or have questions about the cruise or drawing, write or call Mildred Bennett, 2719 Marin Ave., Berkeley, CA 94708, (526-1260). Other ticket sources will be announced next month.

More help wanted: If you have a van and can transport the 5'x6' framed tapestry to wherever (Bay Area) sometime in July, August or September, please call Rusty at 632-4134. This is another much needed service that will be greatly appreciated. Thanks for all anyone can do!

—MONO LAKE COMMITTEE

The Back Yard Birder

No one ever said "parenting" is easy. Birds must reproduce and rear their young to continue the species. They encounter a myriad of unknown hazards, they must make their young self-sufficient and they must continue the species. In some species both female and male share the task, while in other groups one or the other goes it alone. Sound familiar?

Over the centuries birds have evolved a fixed plan of mating and rearing their young which, by natural selection, is the most efficient for the species. This behavior is called "reproductive strategies." Basically, birds produce as many young as can be successfully raised; predators or food shortages control the number of birds the environment can support.

The breeding cycle is timed to occur when food is most available while the female is forming eggs, as well as when the young need food. This is usually springtime in our hemisphere, but some species await a particular food's availability. For example, the American Goldfinch breeds in late summer when thistle seed is abundant. And in arid areas breeding occurs whenever it rains, whatever the time of year.

Because most North American birds do not breed where they winter, springtime is alive with returning male migrants who sing, display and

establish territories for mating and nesting. Among species such as ducks and geese where the Arctic breeding season is very short, the male and female arrive already paired and ready to start a family.

Depending upon how much growth it has done within the shell, a baby bird is either precocial or altricial. Waterfowl, rails, plovers, sandpipers, cranes, grouse, quail and pheasants are precocial. That is, the newborn are covered with down, are bright-eyed, alert and capable of recognizing and securing their own food. Altricial chicks may or may not be born with down and all remain in or near the nest, relying totally upon their parents. There's a wide range of dependence upon parents. Gull and tern chicks are able to wander close to the nest. Hawks, owls and herons, though covered with down, must stay in the nest for several weeks. Most other birds are born naked with their eyes closed and weak legs that can't support them. They will start begging for food at the slightest movement of the nest even though they cannot see whether it's Mom, Dad or a birdwatcher.

The hardest task, especially among altricial birds, is feeding. Most species share the task, both male and female. Depending upon the time of day, the weather and the type of food, the rate at which young are fed varies greatly. Small insect hunters need not go far and may bring food to their young every few minutes. Larger birds, who must hunt farther from the nest, bring large amounts of food but less frequently. The young of raptors, as an example, can gorge themselves and go for hours or even days without eating. Feeding itself is a vital skill and in some breeds the young stay with the parents until that skill is well-developed.

What the babies eat is usually the same type of food they would seek as adults. However, among fruit and seed-eaters the young's diet is supplemented with insects to insure greater amounts of protein and other nutrients. Pigeons have a unique diet for their young. Both parents produce "pigeon's milk," a rich secretion of proteins, vitamins and fats actually produced by a sloughing off of cells lining the crop.

When there is more than one young, the greediest, the noisiest is fed first, then the next energetic one and so on. If there is enough food all will be fed; otherwise only the strongest survive. This may seem cruel, but if food is in short supply and if it is equally divided, not even ONE chick would survive.

Development of the young varies greatly according to the species and to the area in which they are raised. Eventually all must leave the nest.

There are a multitude of breeding strategies and all are fraught with danger. Mortality rates are about 50%. There are infertile eggs, nest

destruction by predators or weather, changing food supplies, parasites and disease. Somehow, by the following breeding season (excepting interference by man) the breeding population is approximately the same. Incredible!

If ever you have seen an adult bird defend its nest you have an idea of the determination of that bird to rear its young successfully. Would we do any less?

—MEG PAULETICH

Ashore —

(continued from page 93)

The PRBO has been collecting for over 14 years the massive information that the Farallon Islands provide. The staff check the weather seven times daily and stick to a rigorous schedule of censusing and observing all the bird and pinniped (seals and sea lions) populations.

A typical census is an adventure in itself. The hardy biologist barges through hundreds of flying, screaming, irate Western Gulls (the gulls tend to be edgy while nesting) and begins the climb up a steep, treacherous path to a blind perched on top of a rocky cliff. At the top is the rickety wooden shack that doesn't appear large enough to hold one person. However, it is roomy enough inside for two chairs, which are extremely vital pieces of furniture when an individual observes. The island receives more than a stiff ocean breeze day and night so a blind that has glass panes instead of an open window insures that the researcher isn't struggling with the wind while viewing the birds. Once seated in the blind one peers out to see hundreds of nesting birds, some busy warming their eggs or courting, others adjusting their nests or sleeping, being social or even anti-social with a partner or neighbor. Depending upon which blind is visited, one can observe at a very close range nesting Western Gulls, Pigeon Guillemots, Common Murres and Pelagic and Brandt's Cormorants. The illusive Tufted Puffin and Rhinoceros Auklet may even be spotted. There are also places on the island where it is possible to sit approximately 20 feet away from Elephant Seals, California and Stellar Sea Lions and Harbor Seals and watch them enjoying the island life.

After sitting in a blind about two hours it is time for the researcher to hike the windy path up to the lighthouse to count all nesting Black Oystercatchers through a scope or visit the marked Cassin's Auklet burrows to check the eggs or young inside.

These activities keep the PRBO staff busy until dusk after which it is time for a delicious home-cooked (of course) meal and then a review of the day's observations. This is fun because, as you well know, unusual

birds turn up on the Farallon Islands. While I visited, there was a racing pigeon from Reno which unfortunately had overshot the finish line in San Francisco.

Despite the onset of night the hustle and bustle of the island continues. Around 9:30 p.m. one can hear strange noises from outside. The Cassin's Auklets are out and about! They fly like large misguided bumblebees, bump into the house (and each other) and scramble about on the ground. All the while it sounds as if they are crying loudly from inside their burrow, "Let me out! Let me out!" and I suppose from outside their burrow, "Let me in! Let me in!"

This goes on all through the night. You can see that by day or night the Farallon Islands are alive and active. The best way to get a close look at the islands is by taking the GGAS Farallon Islands boat trip next spring. In fact, while I was on the island there was a boat full of sea-going birders passing by!

If you are interested in more information about the islands and their history, see Pete White's article on the Farallones in the March 1982 *GULL* (p. 38). Also, William Dawson has written humorous, unforgettable descriptions of the pelagic nesting birds on the Farallones in "The Birds of California," which is in the GGAS library.

—ANDREA KIESERMAN

Quality of Life Study

For the last 13 years the National Wildlife Federation has been making an annual study called the Environmental Quality Index, an attempt to assess the nation's "quality of life" by measuring seven broad environmental indicators. The 1981 index, published recently in the federation's magazine, *National Wildlife*, shows a drop in environmental quality for the second consecutive year. The federation notes that during these two years of decline the nation's environmental laws and programs have been under the "harsh scrutiny of a new administration."

Of the seven natural resources measured, four—water, living space, soil and wildlife—showed losses last year. The other three—forests, air and minerals—held their own.

The index is based on a mix of objective measurements and subjective, informed judgments of environmental trends. It was prepared by the federation staff in conjunction with government experts, private specialists and academic researchers.

Docent Training Opening

The Oakland Museum Docent Council is seeking volunteers to train as interpretive guides in the Natural Sciences Gallery at the Oakland Museum.

The docent program provides a unique opportunity for persons interested in expanding their knowledge of the ecology of California and sharing that knowledge and enthusiasm with adults and children who visit the museum.

Training classes for the Natural Sciences docent program, recognized as one of the nation's finest, begin in September. Training consists of two semesters of academic work in California Ecology and one semester of in-gallery training under the direction of the museum's curatorial staff, plus field trips, research papers and independent study. Natural Sciences docent training will be in the Oakland Museum Lecture Hall, starting Tuesday, September 14, from 9 a.m. until noon. Fee for docent training is \$60 with a limited number of scholarships available. Upon completion of training, volunteers are asked to serve a minimum of two one-half days each month.

To learn more about this opportunity for community service, call Marian Nielsen, docent coordinator, Oakland Museum, 273-3514.

Discount on Field Guides and Binoculars

National Audubon Society's Western Education Center bookstore, Book Nest, has just published its 1982-83 catalog. The catalog includes a selection of books and field guides on birds and other natural history topics. Bushnell binoculars and telescopes, bird feeders and field guide carriers are also available. For NAS members there is a 20% discount on optical equipment and a 10% discount on virtually all other items. To receive a catalog, write: Book Nest, National Audubon Society, 376 Greenwood Beach Rd., Tiburon, CA 94920.

Population Leaflet Available

National Audubon Society has published a leaflet explaining why it supports stabilization of human population, what the society is doing about it and how members can help. For a free copy, write to Population Program, National Audubon Society, 950 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022.

North American Birds—A Slide Collection

The Western Education Center is developing a collection of original slides of North American wildlife. The initial phase of this project emphasizes the birdlife. Succeeding phases will add plants, reptiles, amphibians and mammals. The purpose is to provide, at minimal cost, a resource for developing educational programs, illustrating lectures and incorporating slides into displays.

Many beautiful 35mm slides have been generously donated by members and friends of the National Audubon Society. Though the collection is not complete, WEC has published a catalog listing what is now available.

Quality slides of the remaining bird species are still needed. If you can help support this important resource by submitting your high quality slides for inclusion, it will be appreciated. Full credit will be given all donors.

For a catalog listing the slides ready for purchase, a list of bird species needed to complete the collection and/or an entry form for slides you wish to donate, please write: North American Birds, 376 Greenwood Rd., Tiburon, CA 94920.

Pigeon Hole

When Nancy Conzett described the editor's tasks to me she held out hope that my days would be brightened by letters from readers. To date I have heard from no one. Your comments would make for a better *Gull*.

Fanya Carter, whose proofreading makes *The Gull* a pleasure to read, continues to make her contribution.

Berkeley members: Do you see Berkeley's flock of Band-tailed Pigeons? About ten years ago I first noticed a few, six or so; now the flock of about 30 visit a feeder on San Luis Rd. near Indian Rock Ave., a few sometimes, other times the whole gang. Their frequent base is a huge Rock Pine at the intersection. This spring two pairs seem to be nesting in nearby Monterey Pines. Drop me a postcard if you see this flock; perhaps we can map their range.

In the editor's absence, Nancy Conzett will be back again to get out the September issue of *The Gull*. For that, Nancy, thanks!

—EDITOR

GGAS Board of Directors May Meeting

The Board met on May 31 to attack the urgent year end tasks. It adopted a budget for the fiscal year that begins in June, made recommendations for the revision of the bylaws as required each year and heard the first financial report of the new treasurer. It heard the report of the nominating committee and the president to the effect that the slate of officers had been duly elected.

Joshua Aavon Barkin

Many friends and members of Golden Gate Audubon Society mourn the death of Joshua (Josh) Barkin on April 17, 1982. He was a member of the chapter and an active participant in its affairs. A tree planting ceremony was held May 19 in the Tilden Nature Area in Josh's memory. He was well known as a skilled interpreter of nature at Tilden Park. To many he was a very special person.

GIFTS AND BEQUESTS

For GGAS

In memory of

Richard C. Houston

Gift of

Ed and Bonnie Hubbard
Edward and Margaret McDevitt
Trevor V. White

In memory of

Marion Foster Harvey

Claudine Black

In memory of

Dr. Max D. Levinger

Ernest L. Levinger, M.D.

For Mono Lake Project

California Alpine Club

The Society welcomes gifts in general or gifts in honor or in memory of relatives and friends. Such gifts will be used as specified by the donor or, if unspecified, at the discretion of the GGAS Board of Directors. This includes their use for general GGAS activities or for special programs of the Society including Audubon Canyon Ranch of which GGAS is a sponsor. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. to Minnie Groshong, Corresponding Secretary, Golden Gate Audubon Society, 2718 Telegraph Ave., #206, Berkeley, CA 94705-1179. All gifts are tax deductible. The Society is also appreciative of any bequests. Such bequests should specify as recipient the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. All gifts, donations and bequests will be acknowledged in *The Gull* as well as personally on behalf of the Society by the Corresponding Secretary.



Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc.

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THE GULL

July-August 1982

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First Vice President, Dan Murphy (564-0074)*
Second Vice President, Robin Pulich (848-3594)*
Recording Secretary, Helen Green (526-5943)*
Corresponding Secretary, Minnie Groshong (526-8443)*
Treasurer, Frank Lowe (848-3594)*

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Education, GGAS office (843-2222)
Field Trips, Shirley Kelly (387-8290)*
Extended Field Trips, GGAS office (843-2222)
Finance, Joyce Davis (524-1506)
Emeryville Crescent, Vera Paraschak (525-7681)*
Hospitality, Hazel Houston (653-7347)*
Membership, Maybelle Groshong (526-8443)*

*Member of the Board of Directors

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA RARE BIRD ALERT (recorded) 843-2211
Executive Director, Andrea Kieserman (843-2222)

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Publicity, GGAS office (843-2222)

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Observations: Stephen Bailey (548-9507)
and Joseph Morlan (524-7421)

Librarian, Christine Jones (929-0327)

Mail for all individuals listed above should be sent to the GGAS office.

Send address changes to office promptly; Post Office does not forward *THE GULL*. Monthly meetings: second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$25 per year (individual); \$32 (family); includes *AUDUBON* Magazine and *THE GULL*; to join, make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving *THE GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately \$6 per year; single issues \$1. High school and college student membership \$15 per year. Senior citizen individual \$17, senior citizen family \$19. Associate Membership in Golden Gate Audubon Society, \$10 per year.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 25, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948.

***The Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month.**